



Residential Neighborhoods

Chapter

INTRODUCTION

Mountain View is its neighborhoods. The City's residential policies and programs are based on preserving and protecting those neighborhoods and finding ways to meet community and regional housing needs at the same time. The City recognizes that in order to achieve a specific goal, other goals may not be fully carried out. This is especially true with housing goals since there is little suitable land for housing and an enormous demand for it.

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part is based on the State-required Housing Element and the second one deals with neighborhoods. The Housing Element section looks at the overall community need for quantity and variety of housing, at affordability of housing, at housing opportunity for groups with special needs, and at housing quality. The neighborhoods section deals with residential neighborhoods as a whole and the character and qualities that makes Mountain View a desirable place to live.

The Housing Element was adopted by the City Council on December 10, 2002. The California Department of Housing and Community Development informed the City on January 3, 2003 that the element has been certified as being in compliance with State law. This chapter contains a condensation of that official Housing Element. Goals, Policies and Actions are the same in both documents. They have been renumbered in this chapter to follow the format of the rest of the Plan.

Housing affects every aspect of community life. It satisfies the need for basic shelter; it establishes the look and feel of neighborhoods; and it affects the composition of the population. The kind and amount of housing that is built has enormous influence over the quality of life, not only in Mountain View, but throughout the southern Bay

Area. Without sufficient housing near jobs, streets and highways become overloaded. Workers have to commute long distances, taking away from the quality of home life and impacting the environment. In turn, the overall economy is hurt as employers find they must pay higher wages to attract a labor force that lives far away or that must pay more for nearby housing.

Accomplishments

Mountain View has made significant strides in carrying out the policies of the 1990 Housing Element and 1992 General Plan. Among the accomplishments through 2000 are:

- Construction of almost 2,500 housing units since 1988. Of these, 305 were affordable to lower income households.
- Rezoning of six sites creating opportunities for 1,274 units that would otherwise not have been permitted. Of these, 987 had been built.
- Preservation of all but one at-risk housing project—a total of 509 units preserved.
- Adoption of a Below-Market-Rate program. Within three years, three units and \$1.6 million in *in lieu* fees had been committed by developers.
- Adoption of a housing impact fee on new commercial and industrial development.
- Adoption of guidelines for development of single-family houses on small lots with about 560 houses built.
- Revision of the companion unit regulations increasing the potential number of units allowed by 75 percent.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

A Gradually Changing Population

Mountain View's population grew from 67,460 in 1990 to 70,708 in 2000, an increase of 3,248, or 4.8 percent. After a post-war growth spurt between 1950 and 1970, population has increased more gradually. The City is projected to grow to 75,200 in 2010, which is a 6.3 percent increase.

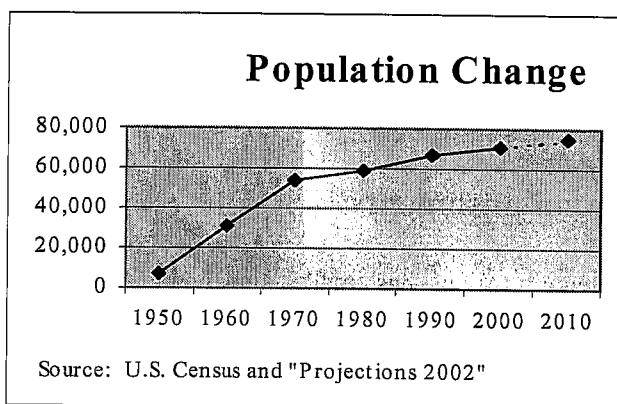


Figure 1: Population Change and Projections, 1950 – 2010

Age. The median age of Mountain View's population increased from 32.8 to 34.6 years between 1990 and 2000. While the percentage of young adults (20 to 35) shrank, those in older age groups grew and the percentage of children (0 to 19) remained about the same as in 1990. Seniors, those 65 and over, increased slightly from 9.8 to 10.6 percent of the population. Overall, the adult population is aging, but the percentage of children is stable. This suggests a continuing need for a variety of housing types.

Ethnicity. According to the 2000 Census, Mountain View's white population declined from 64.5 to 55.2 percent since 1990, while its Asian population increased from 13.7 to 20.7 percent. Hispanics comprise 18.3 percent (a small increase over 1990) and African Americans make up 2.4 percent (a decrease from 1990). American Indians, persons identifying themselves with two or more races, and other ethnic groups make up the remaining 3.4 percent.

Household Composition. About 40 percent of Mountain View households are two-parent families, 35.6 percent are single people, 13.5 percent are non-family households (unrelated individuals) and 11 percent are single-parent households. The average household size is 2.26 persons per household—less than the County average of 2.92 persons per household. This can be attributed to the high percentage of smaller, rental units in Mountain View.

New Types of Housing

Housing grew by 4 percent between 1990 and 2000, a slightly slower rate of growth than population. Housing growth is projected to continue to be slower than population growth, resulting in a very small increase in household size.

Housing Growth			
Year	Occupied Dwelling Units	Households	10-Year Increase
1960	10,297		-
1970	22,837		12,540 122%
1980	28,383		5,546 24%
1990	29,990		1,607 6%
2000	31,242		1,252 4%
2010		32,810	1,568 5%
2020		34,340	1,530 5%

Source: U.S. Census and ABAG "Projections 2002"

Figure 2: Housing Growth and Projections, 1960 – 2020

Although Mountain View's rate of growth has stabilized, different types of housing are now being built. Until the late 1970s, Mountain View was a city of single-family subdivisions and apartments. During the 1980s, developers were building condominiums in large numbers. By 1990, townhouses had become the dominant new unit type and by the end of the decade, single-family houses on small lots (3,000 to 4,000 square feet) had entered the field.



Small-lot single-family houses.

Owners live in 41 percent of the housing in Mountain View; renters live in the other 59 percent. The percentage of owners has increased since 1990 as more townhouses and small-lot single-family houses have been built. However, ownership is still considerably lower than the countywide average of 60 percent. In 2001, the State estimated that 56 percent of the housing units were multiple-family (apartments and condominiums), 28 percent were single-family houses, 12 percent were townhouses and 4 percent were mobile homes.

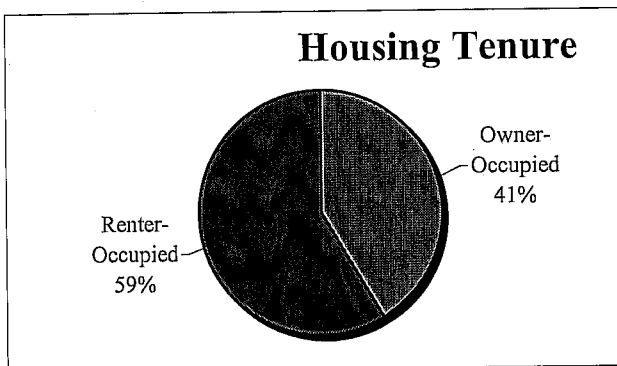


Figure 3: Renter/Owner as a Percent of Total

Projections

The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) projects the regional growth in housing and jobs and assigns a portion of it to each city. ABAG takes into account both the regional economy and demographic trends. It also factors in local market demand, employment opportunities, commuting patterns and public facilities. Estimates of jobs and housing growth in each city are limited, or constrained, by the zoning and available land, in the earlier years of

the projections. The estimates for Mountain View do not include new (2002) plans for housing at Moffett Federal Airfield and Ames Research Center.

Housing and Jobs			
	1990	2000	Projected 2010
Housing Units	30,455	31,309	32,880
Employed Residents	44,054	47,556	50,500
Jobs	63,490	77,370	84,810
Jobs per Employed Resident	1.44	1.63	1.68

Source: ABAG "Projections 2002." Includes Moffett Field

Figure 4: Housing and Jobs, 1990 – 2010

Based on these constraints, ABAG estimates that Mountain View will grow at a rate of 157 housing units and 744 jobs per year between 2000 and 2010. These projections indicate that the current jobs-housing imbalance will worsen.

HOUSING QUANTITY AND VARIETY

Goal

A

Provide policies that encourage a range of housing including single-family, townhouses, apartments, condominiums, mobile homes and other housing types.

The City is committed to maintaining a range of housing types that meet the housing needs of all Mountain View residents. The City also aims to increase the supply of housing to provide its fair share of the regional housing need as required by the State.

Share of Region's Housing Need

Unlike the estimates in ABAG's "Projections 2002," determination of the city's "fair share" is not constrained by current zoning and available land. For Mountain View, the "fair share" allocation is 3,423 units, or 489 units per year between January 1, 1999 and June 30, 2006, the term of the current Housing Element. This is much higher than "Projections 2002" and much higher than the 270 units per year built between 1996 and 2000 which was a period of dynamic economic growth.

To arrive at this number, the State first projected the state-wide housing need, and then allocates a portion to each region in California. In the Bay Area, ABAG assigned a share of this region's need to each city and county based on a formula that gives equal weight to projected housing and projected jobs. For cities like Mountain View, that have a jobs-housing imbalance, additional land must be zoned to residential to provide adequate sites to meet the housing need.

Fair Share by Income Category

The State also requires that there be a certain number of units in each income category as shown in Figure 5. In determining the income distribution of units, ABAG's formula aims to have each jurisdiction move closer to the regional average. Mountain View's percentages are already near the regional averages.

Fair Share Housing Need		
Income Group	Seven-Year Projected Need	
Very Low Income (0 – 50%)	698	20%
Low Income (50 – 80%)	331	10%
Moderate Income (80 – 120%)	991	29%
Above Moderate (over 120%)	1,403	41%
Total	3,423	100%

Source: ABAG, "Regional Housing Needs Determination, 2001- 2006 Housing Element Cycle," June 2001, Table 12.

Figure 5: Housing Need, Jan. 1, 1999-June 30, 2006

Policy 1. Ensure that adequate residential land is available to accommodate the new construction needed to meet ABAG's Fair Share Housing Needs.

Action 1.a. Encourage the construction and appropriate rehabilitation of an average of 489 units a year over the seven-year life of the Housing Element with an annual report to the Environmental Planning Commission on actual units built.

Adequate Sites

Mountain View has enough land zoned for housing to accommodate about 2,500 of its "fair share" units (including about 1240 units built or in the development pipeline in 1999 – 2001). In order to achieve the remaining 923 units ($3,423 - 2,500 = 923$) in the City's "fair share" allocation, land that is already developed in commercial, industrial or lower density residential use, must be rezoned and ordinances must be changed to encourage more housing. Potential housing sites are shown in Figure 6 and proposed ordinance changes are shown in Figure 8. Figure 7 shows both.

Action 1.b Before 2006, initiate General Plan changes and rezoning of the following sites to residential densities that will support housing affordable to a full range of incomes including households with less than median income.

Rezoning Sites			
	Zoning	Units*	Target Date
Moorpark/Alice	R3-1.5	42	2002
Moffett/Middlefield (NW corner)	40/ac. (Precise Plan)	192	2003
Ada/Minaret	R3-1	152 (101)**	2004
Wyandotte/Independence	R3-2	141	2005
Plymouth/Sierra Vista and Colony/Rengstorff	R3-2	258	2006
TOTAL		785 (734)**	

* Assumes development at 80% of maximum
 ** Net increase over current zoning.

Figure 6: Sites To Be Considered for Rezoning

Housing Sites

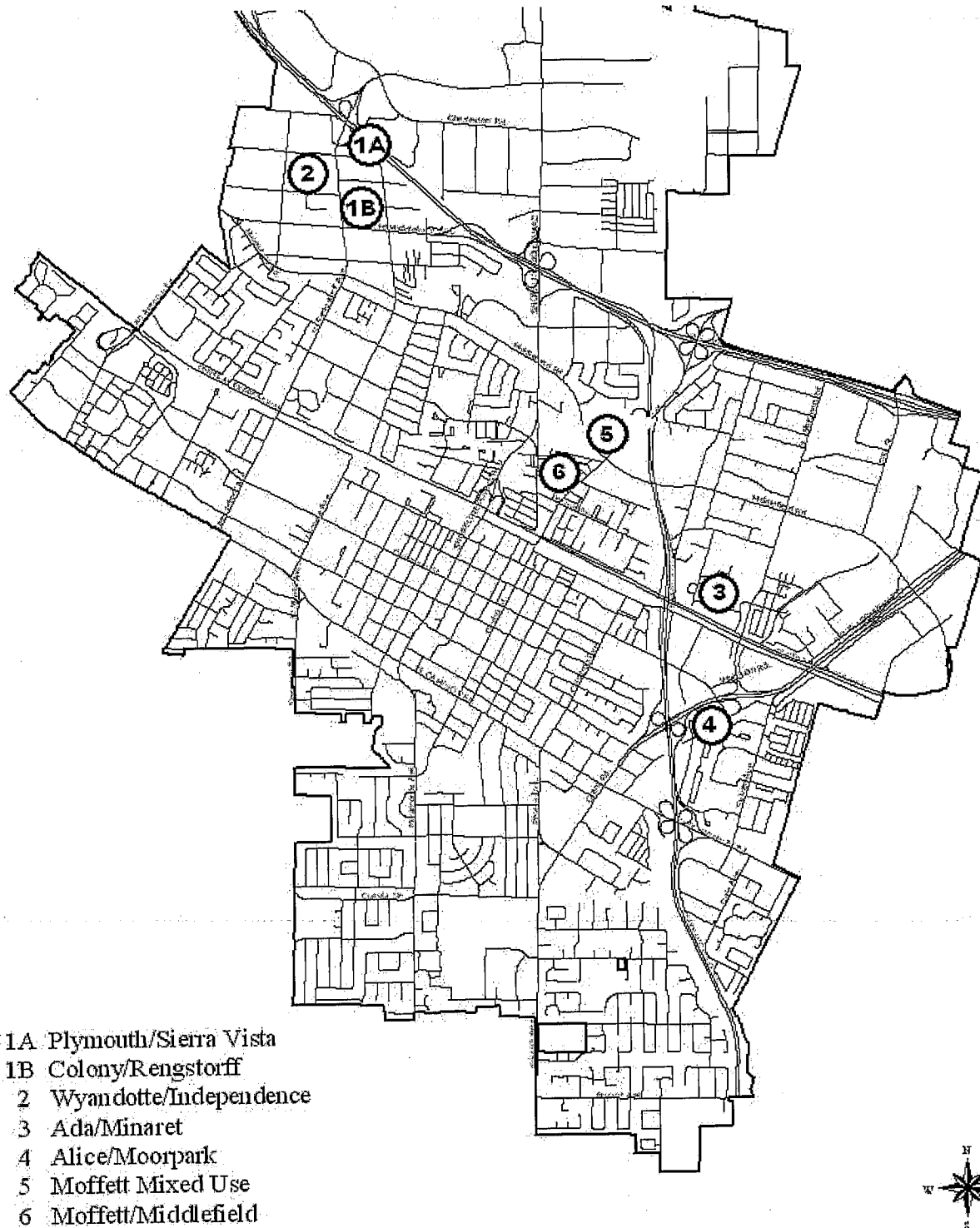


Figure 7: Sites To Be Considered for Rezoning or Ordinance Changes

Action 1.c. Before 2006, initiate amendments to the zoning ordinance and other regulations to increase potential additional housing units by:

- Allowing mixed use in the Neighborhood Commercial zone district on Moffett Boulevard and other areas.
- Allowing redevelopment at significantly higher than existing densities on already-developed multiple-family parcels in locations where the higher densities would be compatible with adjacent properties and including consideration of higher than 10 percent Below-Market-Rate units.

Ordinance Changes		
<u>Changes</u>	<u>Estimated Units</u>	<u>Target Date For Amendments</u>
Moffett Mixed Use	31	2004
Multiple-Family	<u>175</u>	2006
TOTAL	206	

Figure 8: Ordinance Changes To Produce Additional Housing

All sites to be considered for rezoning, and ordinance changes, will undergo further environmental review and public hearings before final decisions are made.

The approximately 25-acre Mayfield Mall site may present another opportunity for some housing if the property owner, Hewlett-Packard, decides to sell it and the buyer wants to redevelop it.

Action 1.d. Revise the Mayfield Mall Precise Plan to allow for housing and other uses if redevelopment is initiated by the property owner.

A preliminary assessment has concluded that the listed sites are served with adequate infrastructure and do not have serious environmental constraints. However, if new extremely hazardous materials are allowed to move in nearby, this could be a deterrent to housing development.

Action 1.e. Initiate amendments to the zoning ordinance and other relevant City regulations to limit hazardous materials use within and near industrial areas proposed to be rezoned to housing under Action 1.b.

Housing projects are seldom built to the maximum density allowed by the zoning. The average is about 75 percent of maximum. Factors like neighborhood compatibility, lot configuration and the location of trees on the site influence the design and potential number of units. As the supply of land that can be developed declines, there may be a greater need to maximize the use of individual sites.

Action 1.f Require Zoning Administrator to review and take action on all applications proposing to develop property at less than the maximum density allowed by zoning. Factors the Zoning Administrator will take into account in making a decision include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The overall goal of increasing the proportion of sites developed at maximum density.
- The density of the surrounding neighborhood.
- Extenuating circumstances such as lot configuration and other factors that may allow for lower densities.
- Proximity to transit corridors and job centers.

Action 1.g Continue to provide appropriate incentives, including the more expeditious review process available to apartments and condominiums as compared to the PUD permit process required for townhouses and small-lot single-family projects, to encourage development at maximum densities. Update development application materials to highlight and promote the simpler review process for apartments and condominiums.

Besides ensuring an adequate number of new housing units, attention should also be focused on variety, compatibility and quality of housing. A variety of housing will help meet the needs of Mountain View's diverse population.

Policy 2. Encourage a mix of housing types, including higher-density and lower-density housing.

Action 2.a Retain the following two sites for single-family residential development with retention of appropriate areas for open space.

- Greenhouse at Marilyn Avenue
- Southeast corner of Grant Road and Levin Avenue

Action 2.b Determine appropriate densities for privately initiated zone changes based on the need for housing, surrounding uses, available infrastructure and environmental constraints with the goal of increasing overall density of new residential construction.

Action 2.c Assure that all new housing is safe and attractive through appropriate design and zoning standards and application of the Uniform Building Code.

Innovative Housing

Some of the area's housing needs can be met with non-traditional dwelling types such as shared housing and companion units. These housing types not only provide alternative housing arrangements for Mountain View residents, they are also generally more affordable.

Action 2.d Continue to allow innovative housing programs such as co-housing and shared housing.

Companion units are usually small, making it more likely that their rents will be affordable. Mountain View made it easier to have a second unit on a

single-family lot when it reduced the required minimum lot size in 2000. However, there have been few applications so far.

Innovative Housing Solutions

Co-housing developments have individual units with kitchens, combined with a common kitchen, meeting room and possibly other shared facilities.

Shared housing generally means an arrangement in which two or more unrelated people, each with private sleeping quarters, share a house or an apartment.

A companion unit, or second unit, is an additional self-contained living unit on the same lot as the primary residential unit. In Mountain View, they are allowed in the R1 zone on lots that are 35% larger than the minimum for the zone.

Action 2.e Disseminate information to homeowners about the City's current provisions for companion units in the R1 zone district.

Mixed Use And Transit Oriented Development

The Community Development Chapter has a policy which encourages Mountain View's highest density residential and mixed use development near transit. Implementation of this policy has won the city several major awards for transit-oriented development. Continuing this policy will help the city achieve its housing goals.

Policy 3. Provide higher density housing near transit, near the Downtown and near other commercial areas.

Action 3.a Continue to allow and encourage mixed-use development at higher densities in the Commercial Residential Arterial Zone District, in the Downtown Precise Plan and near transit.

Rental Housing

Mountain View has a high percentage of rental units—59 percent. They are an affordable form of housing for many lower income households. Rental housing also meets the needs of residents who wish to reduce the demands of property maintenance. It is important to maintain existing rental housing and allow new development.

Policy 4. Continue to provide rental housing.

Action 4.a Continue to regulate conversions of rental units to condominiums by ordinance.

Action 4.b Continue to include potential rental housing sites in the residential land inventory.

Action 4.c Encourage people to rent rooms in their homes.

Ownership Opportunities

Policy 5. Encourage the development of new ownership housing.

Compared to other Bay Area cities, Mountain View has a lower percentage of ownership housing—41 percent. There are only a few sites available for traditional single-family subdivisions. Thus, most new for-sale housing in the last 5 - 10 years has been single-family houses on small lots, townhouses and rowhouses. Guidelines have been developed for small-lot single family and townhouse projects. These guidelines set design standards that promote compatible development and a quality living environment. Rowhouses—which are a more urban form of townhouse with garages at the rear—are becoming more common and guidelines are also needed for them.

Action 5.a Encourage townhouses, rowhouses, and condominiums in multiple-family zones.

Action 5.b. Maintain and update as needed the Townhouse and Small-Lot Single-Family Guidelines.

Action 5.c Develop guidelines for row house development.

Condominiums are generally the lowest-priced form of ownership housing. However, there have been few built in the past 5 - 10 years. Developers shy away from them because of the prevalence of construction defect litigation targeting condominiums. Legislation is needed to provide greater protection to both developers and condominium buyers. This legislation could encourage developers to build more condominiums and thus create more affordable ownership housing in Mountain View.

Action 5.d Support construction defect legislation that will both protect homeowners from defects and encourage developers to build attached housing such as townhouses and condominiums.

Mobile Homes And Manufactured Housing

Mobile homes and manufactured housing units can fit either into a single-family neighborhood or into a mobile home park. When they are part of a single-family neighborhood, it is important to treat these units architecturally so that they blend in with the neighborhood. When they are part of a mobile home park, these units can create their own neighborhood style. The six major parks in Mountain View are active neighborhoods with their own strong sense of identity.

Policy 6. Preserve the six major mobile home parks as a vital part of housing opportunities in the community.

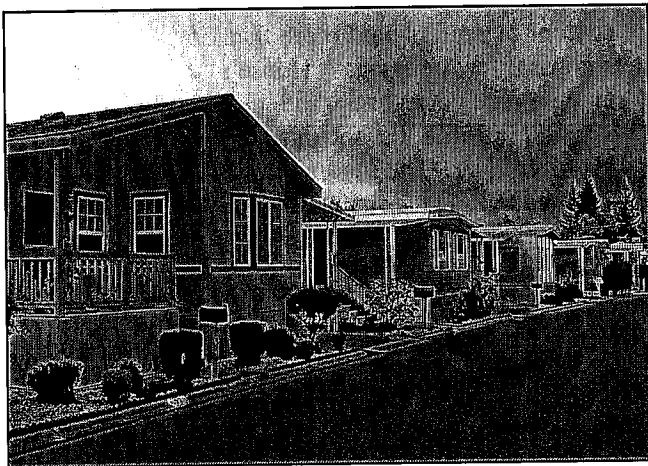
Action 6.a Retain “Mobile Home Park” as a separate residential land use category on the land use map of the General Plan.

Mobile home parks provide affordable housing in a safe and secure environment, with low yard and house maintenance. As a result, mobile home parks attract many retired residents. Mobile home owners enjoy the lifestyle and social benefits of living in a

close-knit neighborhood. The parks are also distinctive because the land and units are owned by different parties. Residents own their homes, but rent the land beneath them. Thus, their housing costs are subject to the same economic pressures that drive up apartment rents. Separate ownership also carries with it the risk of conversion of the land to another use and the loss of this special living arrangement. The State requires a conversion impact report with applications for park conversions. The report must include an assessment of the effects on residents who are displaced when the park is converted.

Action 6.b Require a conversion impact report before approving a mobile home park conversion.

Action 6.c. Require appropriate measures to lessen the adverse effects of mobile home park conversions on displaced mobile home residents.



One of Mountain View's six mobile home parks.

Action 6.d. Consider strategies for assisting low-income mobile home residents with obtaining replacement housing if a mobile home park owner seeks rezoning and other approvals to redevelop his property.

Action 6.e. Investigate strategies to protect the affordability of mobile homes in mobile home parks.

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Manufactured Housing. Individual manufactured housing units, which are also called mobile homes, are allowed in any residential zone, subject to a Development Review Permit. The review is to make sure that the manufactured housing is compatible with the neighborhood in height, bulk and character. Manufactured housing that is mounted on a permanent foundation, and is architecturally compatible with the neighborhood is permitted in residentially zoned districts. The zoning ordinance should be revised to clarify that companion units can be manufactured homes.

Policy 7. Allow mobile and manufactured housing in all residential zones and assure that it is safe and attractive.

Action 7.a Encourage mobile and manufactured housing that is safe and attractive.

Action 7.b. Maintain Zoning Ordinance design requirements and criteria for manufactured housing and mobile homes.

Action 7 c. Clarify, in the zoning ordinance section on companion units, that manufactured homes may be used as companion units.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Goal

B

Preserve and increase the supply of affordable housing with an emphasis on low-income and very low-income housing.

Housing costs skyrocketed in the last half of the 1990s as the booming economy attracted thousands of new high tech workers to Silicon Valley. Between 1990 and 2000, 15,550 new jobs were created in the City's major industries while only 1,600 new housing units were built. In addition to the huge demand and limited supply, escalating land prices and high construction costs also contributed to the high cost of housing.

Late in 2000, the median price of a single-family home in Mountain View was about \$650,000 and the median for a condominium or townhouse was about \$375,000. Average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in a larger complex was \$1,854 per month. Although these prices declined as the economy cooled in 2001, they are still not affordable to many households.

What Is "Affordable Housing"?

"Affordable housing" is housing that is priced so that renters or buyers do not have to pay more than 30 percent of their gross monthly income for rent or mortgage payments, taxes, insurance, and, in the case of renters, utilities. Typically, it is households in the lower income categories that have difficulty finding housing that does not consume more than 30 percent of their income. Therefore, the term "affordable housing" usually refers to housing that is priced to serve lower income households.

In 2001, only 15 percent of Santa Clara County households earning the median income (\$87,000 for a four-person people) could afford to buy a single-family house, although more could afford condominiums and townhouses. Lower income households are even more vulnerable in periods of dramatic rent increases. People have a choice of commuting increasingly long distances from less expensive housing outside of the county, paying

much more than 30 percent of their income for housing, or crowding into apartments and houses.

Policy 8. Provide a variety of affordable housing opportunities for lower and moderate-income households.

According to the 2000 Census, 19 percent of Mountain View's families had Very Low Incomes; 7.5 percent were in the Very Low- to Low-Income range; 19.4 percent were in the Low- to Median-Income range and 8.8 percent were in the Median- to Moderate-Income range. The remainder, 45.3 percent, had Above Moderate Incomes.

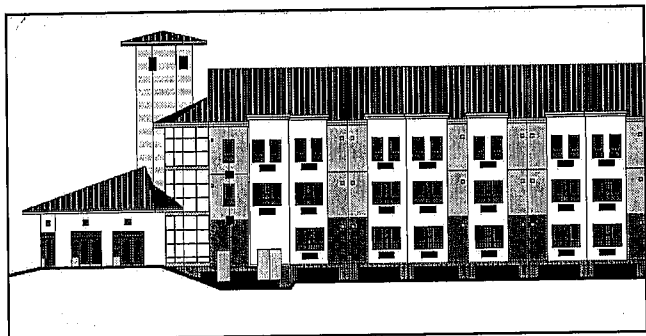
For Mountain View's non-family households (including single persons), 25.1 percent had Very Low Incomes; 9.1 percent were in the Very Low- to Low-Income range; 20.3 percent were in the Low- to Median range, and 9.6 percent were in the Median- to Moderate-Income range. The remainder, 35.9 percent had Above Moderate Incomes.

In 1999, 51 percent of mortgage holders and 46 percent of renters paid more than 25 percent of their incomes for housing. Households in the lower income categories may be eligible for federally-assisted affordable housing if they meet income qualifications. The income limits are established by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and are updated annually.

HUD Income Limits, 2001 Four Person Household	
Extremely Low Income (30%)	\$26,200
Very Low Income (50%)	\$43,650
Low Income (80%)	\$69,050
Median Income (100%)	\$87,300
Moderate Income (120%)	\$104,760

The two most common forms of federal assistance are subsidized housing projects and the Section 8 voucher program. In 2002, there were 855 subsidized housing units in Mountain View—596 for seniors and 259 for families. The supply will be increased by 14 percent (120 units) when a new efficiency studio project is completed as expected in

2004. The efficiency studio project is targeted to serve Very Low Income single renters, although some of the units will be large enough for two persons.



Plans for new efficiency studio development.

Action 8.a Work with a non-profit developer to finance and construct an efficiency studio development with 110 to 130 low-income units on the San Antonio Loop site.

Action 8.b Assure complete funding of the 110-130 unit efficiency studio project using Revitalization District funds, Below-Market-Rate *in-lieu* fees or other funding sources.

Mountain View has established a five-year "quantified objective" for the number of new and rehabilitated housing units it expects to be provided between 2001 and 2006. The number of lower income units is less than the City's need as prescribed under the "fair share" formula (Figure 5), but it is realistic given all available funding sources.

Action 8.c Encourage housing for low and very low income families and individuals throughout the City. Work toward the goal of 150 units of new housing for households with very low or low incomes (in addition to the 110-130 efficiency studio units already in process).

Action 8.d Continue to work with housing developers to help identify appropriate sites and to encourage the development of affordable housing and housing for the elderly both through new construction and the acquisition and rehabilitation of existing housing developments, including possible sites within the areas listed in Action 1.b.

Housing for Seniors

Seniors, those who are 65 or over, comprised 10.5 percent of the population in 2000. Older renters have the highest incidence of paying more than 30 percent of their income for rent compared to all other age groups.

Housing for the elderly is typically one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments designed for people 62 years of age and older. It can have higher densities than family housing, primarily because older people do not own as many cars and need less active open space. Housing for the elderly usually includes some units for the handicapped.

Closeness to services and relatively less expensive land are the City's two most important considerations when it evaluates sites for housing for the elderly. Services include shopping, public transportation, social services and health care. Projects should have between 50 and 100 units for efficient management, and should be built at densities of 20 to 50 units per acre. The City will also consider compatibility with the neighborhood, unit cost and community acceptance. Of secondary importance are closeness to recreation and churches and the absence of detrimental conditions such as traffic, noise and nearby industry.

Mountain View has four housing projects for the elderly and three others with some units for seniors, for a total of 596 subsidized senior housing units. The demand for senior housing units is very high. Those who apply to live in subsidized senior housing face waiting periods of two to four years.



Community garden at an affordable senior housing project.

Action 8.e Encourage senior housing including projects with centralized facilities or congregate care. Work toward the goal of 100 units of new senior housing.

Special Needs Housing

Some groups within the larger population have special housing needs not addressed by the conventional housing market. These include lower income persons with physical, mental or emotional disabilities, large families and households headed by single women with small children.

Based on extrapolations from countywide surveys and 2000 Census data, it is estimated that in Mountain View:

- About 400 – 450 people with mental illnesses need both housing and life skills training.
- About 75 persons with developmental disabilities need housing.
- About 6.8 percent of all households are living in overcrowded conditions.

- There are 2,270 female-headed households, of which 1,045 had children under the age of 18. Many are low income and need affordable and supportive housing.
- About 280 people in Northern Santa Clara County receive treatment for HIV and AIDS, and are unable to work and afford housing.
- About 9,530 residents over the age of five have disabilities. (The 1990 Census showed that about 3,735 households with disabled persons need modifications to make their homes more accessible.)

These people can be assisted with a combination of special programs and regional responses.

Action 8.f Continue to fund a program, such as Economic and Social Opportunities, Inc.'s Home Repair/Home Access Program, that assists handicapped low-income homeowners with minor renovations to their homes to make them accessible.

Action 8.g Work with non-profit agencies, other cities and the County, and developers on regional approaches to providing housing for persons with physical or mental disabilities, victims of domestic violence, and the homeless.

Action 8.h Continue to zone areas for single-family houses that are designed with enough bedrooms to accommodate larger families.

Homelessness

The homeless are people who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. Homeless people include those who are staying in temporary or emergency shelters or transitional housing or who are staying with friends or other people with the understanding that shelter is being provided as a last resort. They may live in hotels until their money runs out near the end of the month, then become homeless. There are also those without a shelter and in need of rehabilitative help, and the chronically

homeless—people looking for three meals and a bed, dependent on the "system."

It is not easy to get an accurate count of homeless people. However, a survey taken in Santa Clara County (including locations in Mountain View) in January 1999 found that:

- Over 40 percent surveyed reported being homeless for more than one year—about the same as in a 1995 survey.
- The number of children who are homeless comprised 31 percent of the total sample, an increase from 19 percent in 1995.
- Children in the 1999 survey were older than their counterparts in the 1995 survey. Sixty percent of the children in families were under the age of 12, compared to 74 percent in 1995.
- The number of working homeless has increased from 12 percent in 1989, to 24 percent in 1995, to 34 percent of the total homeless population in 1999.

Another indicator of homelessness is the number of Mountain View residents on the Santa Clara County Housing Authority's waiting list who identified themselves as homeless. There were 40 in 1999.

Mountain View's homeless assistance strategy consists of local and regional programs. Locally, the City tries to create affordable housing, such as the efficiency studio project, and to support programs, such as the Section 8 voucher program, to prevent persons from becoming homeless.

Action 8.i Continue to support programs that protect people from becoming homeless.

Mountain View also assists persons who are homeless by funding short-term shelter and emergency assistance programs. One of these programs is the Community Services Agency's motel voucher program that helps 20-30 families and individuals per year to obtain emergency housing. Another is the Alpha Omega Program which provides a rotating shelter and case management at area churches. The program serves 55 single adults each year (9 to 12 persons on any given night, although up to 29 are allowed).

There are two permanent homes in Mountain View for those in need of temporary housing. Homeless and runaway teens can live at Casa SAY, a single-family house in Mountain View with room for six teens, operated by Social Advocates for Youth. Single adults who successfully "graduate" from the Alpha Omega Program are eligible to move into a transitional home for six people in Mountain View.

Action 8.j Continue to fund or support efforts to provide short-term shelter and emergency assistance to persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, including homeless and runaway youth, with programs such as the Emergency Housing Consortium, the Community Services Agency's Emergency Assistance Program and Casa SAY.

Action 8.k Continue to provide funding for the operation of a local shelter, such as the Alpha Omega Rotating Homeless Shelter.

Action 8.l Continue to support Mountain View's six-bed transitional house for previously homeless persons.

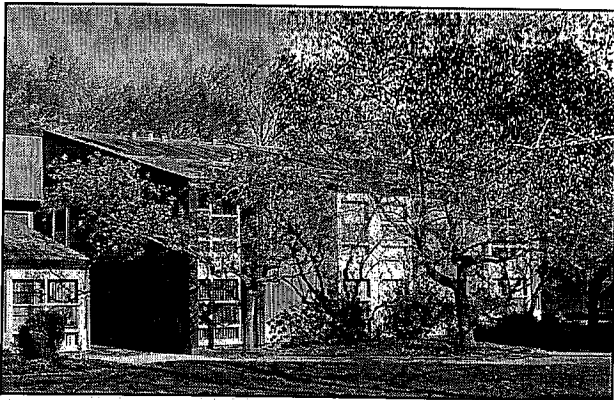
To address homelessness on a regional scale, the City participates in the Santa Clara County Collaborative on Housing and Homeless Issues and supports several regional shelters including the Clara-Mateo Alliance in Menlo Park and the Emergency Housing Consortium in San Jose. The Clara Mateo Alliance operates a shelter for homeless persons at the Menlo Park Veterans Center where 15 of the 480 total annual clients are Mountain View residents. It also operates a family shelter where about 12 of the 154 total annual clients are Mountain View residents. The Clara Mateo shelters are within four miles of Mountain View.

Action 8.m Continue to participate in regional homeless programs and to support short-term shelter and transitional housing programs, such as the Clara-Mateo homeless shelter.

At Risk Housing

Over the past 10 years, Mountain View has preserved affordable housing in five developments that were at risk of being converted to market-rate projects. These projects had been financed under special HUD assisted programs. These HUD programs required that rents be affordable, but property owners could pay off the mortgages and leave the programs after 20 years. In three cases, the City used its CDBG, HOME and local housing funds to assist non-profit organizations to purchase these properties. In the other two cases, the City assisted with refinancing efforts to lower property debt and in finding eligible non-profit agencies to purchase the properties.

The five developments that were preserved were Central Park, Monte Vista Terrace, Shorebreeze, Sierra Vista I and Tyrella Gardens, with a total of 509 units.



Sierra Vista Gardens preserved as affordable senior housing.

The Section 8 Program

The Section 8 program subsidizes rents for eligible tenants. The units may be in market-rate developments or in the federally-subsidized projects.

Owners and managers of market-rate projects often have little incentive to rent to Section 8 tenants if there are other potential renters who can pay high rents and move in immediately. Cooperation between landlords and housing support groups may help streamline the process of matching tenants who qualify for Section 8 vouchers with apartments.

Section 8 Program

The County Housing Authority operates the federal Section 8 program in Mountain view. Section 8 has two parts: certificates and vouchers.

Section 8 certificate holders rent from apartment developments that have Section 8 contracts with the Housing Authority. The certificate holders are not permitted to pay more than 30 percent of their incomes toward rent. The federal government, through the Housing Authority, pays the apartment owner the difference between what the tenant can pay and the fair market rent as determined by HUD.

Section 8 voucher holders may rent from any willing property owner. The property owner must agree to contract with the Housing Authority to receive the federal rent subsidy. Property owners may not charge more than the Fair Market Rent as determined by HUD. The Housing Authority pays a subsidy equal to the difference between the Fair Market Rent and 30 percent of the tenant's gross income.

Policy 9. Provide renters with stable rental opportunities.

Action 9.a Work with the Tri-County Apartment Association, the Mountain View Housing Council, landlords and affordable housing advocates to develop strategies to preserve rental housing, including increasing participation in the Section 8 program with a goal of 10 percent of all rental units in the City.

Action 9.b Participate in a regional program to increase Section 8 participation.

Action 9.c Identify resources such as a caseworker or ombudsman whose role is to encourage renter-owner cooperation in obtaining the goal of 10 percent participation citywide in the Section 8 program and additional outreach programs identified in this Housing Element.

Action 9.d Determine whether there are cost-effective alternatives for improving the Section 8 rental unit placement process, such as modest city funding

for a non-profit housing organization to help maintain client files and submit Section 8 paperwork.

- Action 9.e** Support other strategies and programs to supplement the Section 8 program such as programs to provide renters with deposits, emergency rental assistance and coaching on how to apply for a rental unit.

In the past, HUD's Fair Market Rents did not keep up with the rapidly changing rental market in Santa Clara County. Many voucher holders could not find apartments with rents low enough to receive approval from the Housing Authority. Although HUD raised Fair Market Rents in 2001, it could become a problem again.

- Action 9.f** Actively lobby the Santa Clara County Housing Authority, Congressional officials and others for changes including making the Section 8 program better reflect "fair market rents" in the Mountain View area.

The number of households with housing problems far exceeds the supply of subsidized housing. Housing problems are defined as overcrowding, overpayment for housing, and substandard conditions. Renters are especially vulnerable in periods of dramatic rent increases.

- Action 9.g** Implement appropriate ordinances or programs with the goal of providing additional housing security for long-term renters:

- Explore Palo Alto's, as well as other cities', mandatory mediation programs.
- Expand outreach about tenant's rights and the City's mediation program through public and private agencies, and programs sponsored by the City.

The supply of lower rent housing in the private market is constantly changing. If the City could track changes in costs, rents and incomes annually, it could better understand the dynamics of the housing market. There may be ways to collect data on average cost of renting. For example, average

rents for larger apartment developments is available. Rents in smaller complexes and in mobile home are very difficult to monitor.

Monitoring the Housing Supply

- Policy 10.** Monitor the supply and costs of existing rental, mobile home and ownership housing.

- Action 10.a** Use available statistical data to track the distribution of Mountain View's existing rental, mobile home, and ownership housing opportunities among the income categories Very Low, Low, Moderate and Above Moderate.

- Action 10.b** Investigate ways of developing a comprehensive inventory of existing rental housing (including mobile homes) to track number of units and rents for units (and mobile home spaces) throughout the city.

Housing for Community Service Workers

In order to respond to the needs of residents, and also to address the jobs-housing imbalance, the City has tried to target its affordable housing to people who already live or work in Mountain View. Within federal guidelines, the City has adopted a policy that gives priority to persons who have lived in the City for at least six months or who have worked in the City for at least a year. These preferences apply to projects funded with federal grants such as CDBG.

It is especially important to have teachers and public safety officers living in the City. They are essential to the well-being and safety of the community, yet often cannot afford local housing. Therefore, the City has targeted these groups for housing projects and programs that are solely funded with locally-generated fees such as the Below-Market-Rate Program and Housing Impact Fee Program.

Policy 11. Seek methods of ensuring that community service workers can continue to live in Mountain View.

Action 11.a Give priority for subsidized affordable housing to persons who live or work in Mountain View whenever it is legally feasible.

Action 11.b Continue to give priority to City of Mountain View public safety workers, Mountain View public school teachers and persons who live or work in Mountain View (in that order) for housing units supplied under the City's Below-Market-Rate and Housing Impact Fee Programs.

Action 11.c Investigate giving priority to City of Mountain View public safety workers, Mountain View public school teachers and persons who live or work in Mountain View (in that order) for other City-assisted housing projects and programs in addition to those projects and programs noted under Actions 11.a and 11.b.

Besides establishing preferences, the City can make local residents and workers more aware of available subsidized housing through effective outreach programs.

Action 11.d Continue to conduct outreach efforts to identify and assist Mountain View residents and workers who may be eligible for subsidized housing projects and programs

Collaboration between the City and the school districts and with public employee organizations may produce a better understanding of what kinds of assistance employees need and want. It can also lead to a greater awareness of existing programs and to partnerships to create new housing programs.

Action 11.e Conduct ongoing interviews with representatives of City of Mountain View public safety workers, school teachers, and other priority community-service employees to

determine their housing needs and housing programs that can serve them.

Action 11.f Create outreach partnerships with Mountain View school districts and organizations representing teachers, public safety and other relevant employees to increase awareness of affordable housing programs

Action 11.g Work with the Mountain View school districts and organizations representing teachers, public safety and other relevant employees to obtain financial support for affordable housing, including potential use of school district land.

Financing Affordable Housing

While land for housing is scarce, finding the money to build affordable housing is an even greater challenge. Creative use of federal, local and private funding and programs will help meet this challenge.

Policy 12. Make efforts to stimulate private financing for affordable housing development.

The Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) requires banks and other financial institutions to provide a certain amount of construction and permanent loan money at favorable terms to developers of low and moderate-income housing projects.

Action 12.a Continue to provide liaison between banks and affordable housing developers on the Community Reinvestment Program.

Action 12.b Encourage business owners to assist their employees with mortgages and rents.

Government Financing. The primary source of funding for lower income housing in Mountain View is the federal government. Each year, the City receives federal Community Development Block Grant and HOME funds. The amount in 2001-02 was \$891,000 from CDBG and \$477,000 from

HOME. There is a possibility the grants will be reduced in the future based on new data from the 2000 Census. The federal funds are allocated in accordance with a "Consolidated Plan," which brings needs and resources together in a coordinated housing and community development strategy. During the 1990s, a major part of these grants has been used to assist non-profit organizations with purchasing and rehabilitating "at risk" housing projects. For the past several years, the funds have been allocated to the efficiency studio project. Other smaller housing projects and programs have also been funded

Policy 13. Pursue County, State, federal and private government programs that provide financial assistance and incentives for lower-income and moderate-income households.

Action 13.a Apply annually for the City's maximum entitlements under the Community Development Block Grant and HOME programs.

Action 13.b Spend at least half of the City's CDBG and HOME grants to provide housing for lower income households, homeless people and other households with special needs consistent with the City's Consolidated Plan.

Several other federal and State programs are available to help finance affordable housing. One of the most important is the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program which enables non-profit developers to obtain financing through private investors. These tax credits provide a major portion of the financing and are crucial to affordable projects. However, only a limited amount of tax credits are issued each year and their allocation is highly competitive.

Action 13.c Monitor State housing financing programs and apply for funds from those programs suited to local projects.

Action 13.d Support legislation to continue, expand or develop financing programs such as the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program and other tax

incentives for creating affordable housing.

The Section 8 program described earlier is also a major source of federal funds.

Public /Private Partnerships. Two new sources of local funding were created in 2001. The Santa Clara County Housing Trust Fund is a public-private partnership that was established to provide funding for affordable housing. By the end of 2001, more than \$20 million had been contributed by the County, cities and private corporations and individuals. The Trust Fund has targeted three programs for assistance: gap financing for affordable rental housing projects, a first-time home buyer program with low-interest down payments and closing cost loans, and homeless programs.

The Sobrato Family Affordable Housing Fund was endowed with \$10 million by a local developer to support affordable housing projects in Silicon Valley. Interest-free loans are available for land acquisition and pre-development expenses for multiple-family rental projects and homeless and transitional housing.

Action 13.e Contribute a total of \$500,000 to the Santa Clara County Housing Trust Fund with the agreement that these funds be spent on affordable housing projects or programs in Mountain View.

Limited funds and strong competition underscore the importance of City support and cooperation when non-profit developers apply for funding from these sources. The City can sometimes improve the chances that affordable housing projects will receive funding through active and strong support of the project.

Action 13.f Work with non-profit housing developers to optimize their eligibility for financing under various federal, State, County and private programs, such as CDBG, the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program, the Santa Clara County Housing Trust Fund, the Sobrato Family Trust and others.

Revitalization District. Under State law, at least 20 percent of all property tax increments in a redevelopment area must be "set aside" for low and moderate income housing. Mountain View's Downtown Revitalization District is projected to have \$3.7 million in housing revenues between the fiscal years 1999-00 and 2005-06. Of that amount \$809,000 has been committed to the efficiency studio project. The district's "Five-Year Implementation Plan" shows that the remainder could be used for preservation or development of low and very low income housing.

Policy 14. Use locally generated housing funds to provide financial assistance to plan, build and preserve housing for lower-income and moderate-income households.

Action 14.a Use the 20 percent set-aside for affordable housing through the Mountain View Revitalization Authority and the redevelopment plan to enable construction, preservation and improvement of affordable housing. Annually review the percentage set-aside for affordable housing to determine whether it should be increased.

Action 14.b Between 2000 and 2005, allocate \$809,000 of set-aside funds to the construction of an efficiency studio project with 110-130 low-income units and allocate \$2.8 million to the acquisition and conversion of market rate units to affordable units, or development of an affordable housing project.

The North Bayshore Community Fund is a special district that generates tax increments for public improvements in the area. This district is not subject to the "set-aside" requirements, but it may be feasible to funnel some of the tax increments into housing programs.

Action 14.c Evaluate setting aside a portion of the North Bayshore Community Fund for housing as one method of reaching

numerical goals outlined in Actions implementing Policy 10 above.

Local Funding. In response to the increasing cost of housing and a federal funding stream that has remained basically flat, Mountain View has adopted two new programs to create local funding for affordable housing. The Below-Market Rate (BMR) ordinance, adopted in 1999, requires developers to set aside 10 percent of all new housing units for low and moderate-income households or pay an *in lieu* fee. BMR *in lieu* payments are deposited into a Housing Fund and can be leveraged with other funding sources to produce a substantially higher number of affordable housing units than would be built by a developer under the BMR program.

The Housing Impact Fee, adopted in January 2002, requires that new commercial and industrial developments pay a fee to mitigate the impacts of additional jobs on the housing supply. The initial basic fee was set at \$6 per square foot for offices and similar uses and \$2 per square foot for retail and commercial uses. Fees are halved for buildings under a certain threshold size. The fees are required to be adjusted annually in accord with changes in the Consumer Price Index.

Action 14.d Continue to implement the Below-Market-Rate program in which new housing developments over a certain size provide at least 10 percent of their units to low- and moderate-income households or pay fees in lieu of the housing units.

Action 14.e Evaluate the effectiveness of the Below-Market-Rate program in increasing the supply of affordable housing, implementing enhancements as appropriate.

Action 14.f Allocate Below-Market-Rate *in lieu* fees to housing projects for low and moderate income households, including ensuring completion of the 110-130 unit efficiency studios project.

Action 14.g Implement the Housing Impact Fee ordinance to facilitate collection of funds for affordable housing for low and moderate income households.

There may be other local funding sources that the City can explore.

Action 14.h Investigate new ways to generate local funds for low and moderate-income housing from as many different sources as possible.

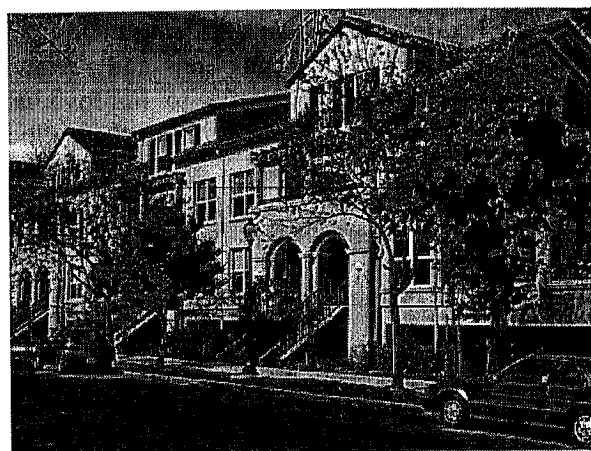
Home Ownership Opportunities. Owning a home is only a dream for many Mountain View residents. In 2001, only 15 percent of median income households could afford to buy a house in Santa Clara County. In Mountain View, a four-person household earning the median income could afford a house costing \$297,000 while the median price of a single-family home was \$650,000. Condominiums and townhouses were averaging \$375,000.

To assist first-time homebuyers, the City participates in the Mortgage Credit Certificate Program (MCC). This program gives a tax credit of up to 15 percent on mortgage interest paid each year. The Santa Clara County Housing Trust Fund has also established an interest-free second mortgage program that can be used for down payments and other closing costs.

Policy 15. Assist moderate-income households in purchasing homes.

Action 15.a Cooperate with the Santa Clara County Housing Bond Coordinator for the issuance of Mortgage Revenue bonds for projects and for the issuance of Mortgage Credit Certificates for first time homebuyers.

Action 15.b Support the Santa Clara County Housing Trust Fund second mortgage program and other federal, State and local programs that enable moderate-income households to purchase homes.



New rowhouses in Downtown.

City Property. Occasionally, the City determines it no longer needs property it has acquired for another purpose. Some of these properties may be suitable—because of their size and location—for housing. For example, the City-owned property on the San Antonio Loop was made available for the efficiency studio project.

Policy 16. Evaluate surplus City properties to determine their suitability for affordable housing.

Action 16.a Specifically include consideration of affordable housing when reviewing City properties that are to be declared surplus.

Constraints On Housing

Several factors can constrain, or limit, housing construction. Governmental factors include land use controls, the review process, development standards, City codes and enforcement, permit fees, on-site and off-site improvements and park land dedication fees. These factors constrain housing only slightly in Mountain View. Non-governmental factors are the price of land, the cost of constructing housing and the availability of financing. These constrain housing greatly.

Policy 17. Remove unnecessary constraints to the development of affordable housing.

Government Constraints. Protecting the overall community health, welfare and safety remains the key focus of development regulations and review. The City continues to seek ways to improve its service by clearly and simply informing the public about development requirements, by making the review process as efficient as possible, and by evaluating whether regulation is the most effective way of dealing with a problem.

Land Use Controls. Mountain View's General Plan, Precise Plans and zoning classifications allow for a range of densities from about 4 to 100 units per acre. Higher densities are generally needed to produce housing affordable to lower income households. Most of the remaining land that can be developed for housing is zoned for densities of more than 20 units per acre.

Review Process. Mountain View has staff-level design review and the Zoning Administrator can approve many projects. The result is an expeditious review for many housing developments. The Development Review Committee has the authority to approve apartment projects in standard zone districts. The Zoning Administrator makes the final decision on residential care homes, as well as small (four or fewer) ownership projects. The City Council makes the final decision on Planned Unit Developments, larger ownership projects and most development in Precise Plans, based on the Zoning Administrator's recommendations. The approval process for companion units is being revised to comply with State legislation passed in 2002. The revision will further simplify the review process for these units.

Development Standards. Mountain View has standards for new development including density, open space, site coverage, setback and landscaping requirements. These standards are comparable to nearby cities. Mountain View also has a density bonus ordinance that allows a 25 percent density bonus for housing projects that provides 20 percent low-income, 10 percent very low-income, or 50 percent senior units. The ordinance also provides for additional incentives including a reduction in site development standards.

Action 17.a Use the density bonus provisions of the zoning ordinance to make

adjustments to development standards that will facilitate the development of affordable housing. (Deleted language included in text above.)

City Codes and Enforcement. The City has adopted the 2000 Model Code (which includes the 1997 Uniform Building Code) and has no significant requirements above and beyond the Uniform Building Code.

Permit Fees. Major development fees include planning fees, building permit fees, off-site facility charges, subdivision fees and parkland dedication fees. A 1999 review of planning fees in nearby cities showed that Mountain View's were generally lower. The City has raised some of its fees since then to recover more costs, but they remain less than the average of the surveyed fees. In 1997, building permit fees were near the high end compared to other cities in the area. Mountain View's fees haven't been raised since then. Also the City does not have a surcharge for Title 24 energy compliance review or other special plan checks as some cities do.

Action 17.b Continue to improve the current simple and efficient level of planning and permit approval and building inspection service, while continuing to protect the public health and welfare.

The City Code allows planning fees for affordable efficiency studios to be waived or reduced. Consideration should be given to amending the City Code to allow for fee waivers or reductions for other affordable housing projects.

Action 17.c Initiate the process of further amending the City Code to allow waivers or reduced fees for planning approvals and building permits for affordable housing projects.

On-Site and Off-Site Improvements. Mountain View, like many cities in California, requires developers to provide on-site and off-site improvements to support the new development. Developer fees cover connections to sewers and water mains, storm drains and inspections. Costs vary greatly depending on whether the street is

improved or unimproved. On an unimproved street, costs range from about \$17,700 for a multiple-family rental unit to \$28,500 for a single-family house in a new subdivision—not including park dedication fees.

Park Dedication Fees. Mountain View has had a park land dedication ordinance since 1972 (revised 1997). The ordinance, like others in the State, requires a developer to dedicate land for parks or pay an *in lieu* fee. The *in lieu* fee is based on the number of housing units and the value of the land. Although Mountain View's fee is high compared to other nearby cities with lower land values (averaging more than \$13,000 per unit in 2000-01), there is a logical nexus between the impact of new residents and the amount of the fee. The fees reflect what the City would have to pay if it had to buy park land or expand recreational facilities to serve new residents. An exception has been made for efficiency studio projects, which can be exempted from paying a fee.

Parking. Mountain View requires 2.3 spaces per unit for multiple-family housing. These requirements are normal for a mid-sized suburban city. The City has a lower parking requirement for some housing. For example, the standard for senior congregate care housing is 1.15 spaces per unit. Also, the parking requirement for efficiency studios can be lowered through a conditional use permit process. For the planned efficiency studio project, 0.6 space per unit was required. The use permit process may also be appropriate for reducing parking requirements for other affordable housing projects.

Action 17.d Initiate the process of further amending the zoning ordinance to allow reduced parking for senior and affordable housing projects on a project-by-project basis.

Mountain View has also allowed shared parking in mixed-use projects combining housing with stores, housing with offices and housing with a train station parking garage.

Action 17.e Encourage shared parking, on a project-by-project basis, in mixed-use developments that include residential units.

Non-Governmental Constraints. The major contributors to the ever-escalating cost of housing in Mountain View are extremely high land prices and construction costs and fluctuating interest rates. According to the Statewide Housing Plan, land costs in Santa Clara County were the highest in the State in 1997, averaging \$40 per square foot. Residential land costs in Mountain View in 2001 were estimated to be \$45 to \$85 per square foot, with the wide range reflecting location and density. Construction costs in Santa Clara County were 21 percent higher than the national average and the second-highest in California.

Creditworthy buyers of residential property and buildings have always been able to get mortgage financing in Mountain View. A countywide fair housing report published in 2002 concluded that "redlining" (the practice of banks' not approving mortgages in areas perceived to be predominantly minority) is not occurring in the County, including Mountain View. The ability to accumulate enough funds for a down payment remains a significant obstacle to many potential homebuyers. The Santa Clara County Housing Trust Fund now has a program to assist moderate income buyers with their down payment.

Loss of Affordable Housing

Most new housing is built on sites that were previously developed. Redevelopment of residential sites often displaces older rental units that are more likely to be rented by low- and moderate-income households. Relocation can be a significant hardship to tenants who have to find affordable housing in a tight housing market.

Policy 18. Review redevelopment proposals to determine whether they create a new demand for affordable housing or reduce the supply of affordable housing.

Action 18.a If redevelopment results in the loss of affordable housing units, require developers to give tenants at least 90 days notice to vacate, professional assistance in locating new rental units, a full refund of tenants' security

deposit and information on affordable housing projects and assistance in Santa Clara County.

REHABILITATION AND PRESERVATION

Goal **Improve the condition of housing
in the City.**

C

Mountain View grew rapidly after World War II, so most of its housing was built in the 1950s or later and is relatively new. Only 9 percent was built before 1950.

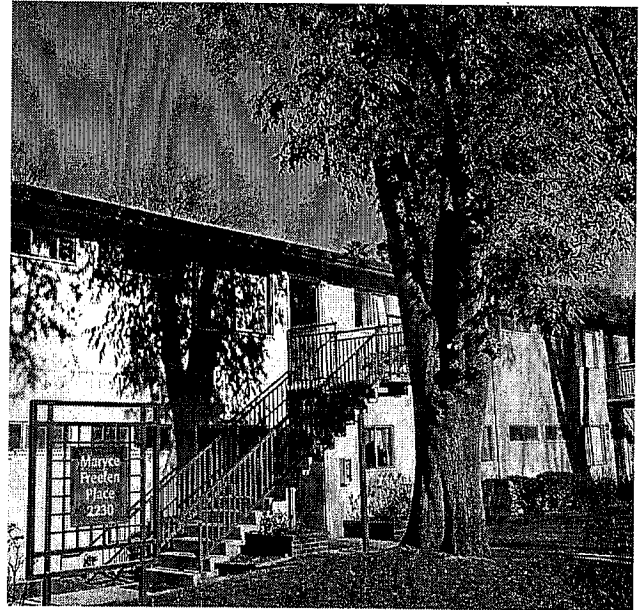
Since much of the City's housing stock is less than 50 years old, it is generally in good condition. Many homeowners are making improvements to their homes in response to the tight housing market and the tax advantages of staying in their own homes. For low-income homeowners who may not be able to afford repairs to their properties, the city operates a house repair program using its CDBG funds. About 20 owner-occupied units are repaired each year.

To ensure rental units are safe and sanitary, the City has had a multiple-family inspection program since the 1970s. Under this program, the City inspects 200 apartment complexes each year to assess whether they meet the basic health and safety standards set by the Uniform Housing Code. Deficiencies must be corrected. Each year, the City returns to re-inspect and sign off on about 265 of the deficient units. This helps keep the housing stock from deteriorating and improves living conditions.

Policy 19. Maintain and improve the housing in the city to meet health, safety, fire and applicable development standards.

Action 19.a Use the multiple-family rental housing inspection program to ensure compliance with the Uniform Housing Code's health and safety standards.

Inspections and enforcement often lead to general repairs and upgrades that help preserve the habitability of the City's housing stock. This process was accelerated in the late 1990s and early 2000s, when the high demand for rental housing resulted in a large surge in private rehabilitation and reinvestment in apartment buildings. For example, 900 units in five large complexes were rehabilitated. Privately-initiated upgrades have contributed significantly to improving the City's housing stock. However, they were also followed by large rent increases to enable property owners to recoup their investments.



Affordable family housing rehabilitated with City assistance.

The City cannot require apartment owners to keep units affordable after they are rehabilitated. However, the City can link up non-profit agencies with the owners of deteriorating buildings as was done with Maryce Freelen Place. This rundown apartment building on Latham Avenue was purchased and rehabilitated by Midpeninsula Housing Coalition with the support of City funding, and now provides affordable housing for 74 families. It also removed an eyesore and trouble spot from the neighborhood.

Action 19.b Continue to inspect at least 200 apartment complexes each year and require repairs to those units that are found to have code violations. Annually provide a list of apartment complexes, that continue show serious signs of deterioration, to non-profit affordable housing organizations that can contact these apartment owners about the potential sale of these properties.

The City can also encourage participation in the Section 8 program which is the only rent subsidy program available for existing, privately-owned buildings.

Action 19.c Promote and provide information on the Section 8 program to apartment building owners who are rehabilitating their buildings, and encourage participation in the program through Actions 5.a, 13.d and 13.e, with a goal of having at least 4 percent of the upgraded apartments remain affordable.

Action 19.d Work with property owners and/or non-profit developers to acquire, rehabilitate and preserve at least 50 units for affordable housing.

Energy Efficiency

Energy supply, use and conservation emerged as a major statewide issue in 2001. The way that new housing is designed and built can contribute much to efficient energy use.

Policy 20. Promote energy-efficient and environmentally sensitive residential development, remodeling and rehabilitation.

One way to reduce energy use is transit-oriented development. Concentrating housing near transit stations helps reduce auto trips and gasoline consumption. Mountain View is a leader in this field. Over 1,000 units have been built near three train stations since 1994.

Action 20.a Continue to implement design standards in new development that encourage alternatives to the auto. These include allowing private streets that are narrower than the City's public street standards in Planned Unit Developments, and requiring sidewalks and bicycle lanes, bus turnouts, and direct pedestrian connections to transit lines.



The Crossings at San Antonio Caltrain Station.

Another way to reduce localized heat build-up is with trees and generous landscaping.

Action 20.b To provide shade and reduce heat retention, continue to require street trees, trees in parking lots at a rate of one tree for every three parking spaces (plus additional landscaped islands and planter strips) and trees in the other required landscaped areas.

Every city is required to comply with Title 24, the portion of the Uniform Building Code that establishes specifications for insulation, glazing, heating and cooling systems and other elements of building construction that relate to energy use. Cities can make compliance easier by providing clear and understandable instructions, streamlining review and not charging special fees.

Action 20.c Maintain an effective and streamlined process to ensure compliance with Title 24 requirements in all new

construction, and implement future changes as quickly as possible after they are approved.

Improved energy conservation can be achieved through designs that take advantage of solar energy and natural ventilation.

Action 20.d Evaluate opportunities for passive solar heating and cooling in the design review process for new development and redevelopment.

Another element of building construction and remodeling where energy savings can be achieved is through recycling of demolition debris and unused materials. Rather than ending up in the landfill, these materials can often be recycled. The City can also investigate "green building" techniques, which are environmentally friendly.

Action 20.e Consider policies to encourage recycling as a part of all construction, reconstruction and remodeling projects.

Action 20.f Encourage "green" building techniques learned as best practices from other cities and organizations.

While solar panels (primarily for heating water) have been in use for about 30 years, new types of small-scale energy generating devices, such as photovoltaic cells, are entering the field. In order to clarify the approval process for these devices, the City's zoning ordinance should be revised to specifically indicate where and how they can be installed. The new standards should ensure that the home-based electrical systems are safe and do not create noise, glare, visual or other impacts on adjacent residences.

Action 20.g Expedite review and approval of alternative energy devices such as solar panels, photovoltaic cells and others.

Action 20.h Revise the zoning ordinance to specifically allow alternative energy generating devices such as wind generators and develop standards to

accommodate their unique requirements while protecting neighbors from visual, noise and other forms of intrusion.

High utility bills are a concern for everyone, but they especially affect the affordability of housing for low-income residents. Several subsidy programs are available. Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) gives discounts on monthly energy bills for low-income households and non-profit group-living facilities. Another PG&E program provides one-time energy bill assistance when there is a sudden unexpected financial hardship. Federal funds to help low income households pay their utility bills (Low-Income Energy Assistance Program) are administered by the Economic and Social Opportunities, Inc. (ESO).

Both PG&E and ESO also have weatherization programs that help pay for the installation of weather stripping and insulation, and door and furnace repairs.

Action 20.g Provide support for energy conservation and assistance programs for low-income households including referral to available programs and advertisement of services.

FAIR HOUSING

Goal

D

Ensure a choice of housing and locations to all regardless of race, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, marital status, familial status, ancestry, religion, color, source of income, or physical or mental handicaps.

Equal access to housing is a fundamental right. The high cost of housing and the tremendous demand relative to the available supply has tended to particularly affect lower income households, people of color, families with small children and disabled persons. With its high proportion of rental units, Mountain View makes special efforts to monitor

possible discriminatory practices and to work with rental property owners and managers.

To help eliminate discrimination in housing, the City has regularly allocated Community Development Block Grant funds to Mid-Peninsula Citizens for Fair Housing (MCFH). The City refers calls about discrimination to MCFH which follows up on complaints and tracks information regarding calls, cases and outcomes.

Policy 21. Prohibit discrimination in the sale, rental and development of housing.

Action 21.a Continue to refer housing discrimination complaints to a City-funded contractor for investigation and counseling.

The City disseminates information about fair housing laws to both renters and property owners. This includes publishing flyers in several languages, providing local, multi-lingual staff to assist the public, distributing housing information at neighborhood meetings sponsored by the City, advertising in newspapers and holding owner/manager training workshops. More than 1,000 fair housing brochures have been distributed to date.

Mountain View also publishes a "Housing Handbook" in English and Spanish that summarizes all of the housing assistance programs that are available in the community.

Action 21.b Continue to publicize the City-funded program for investigating housing discrimination complaints.

Mountain View periodically undertakes an "Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice" as required by HUD for receipt of federal block grant funds. The most recent analysis of fair housing issues consists of a special countywide study, "Fair Housing in Santa Clara County, An Assessment of Conditions and Programs, 2000-2002." Information from this study will be used to update the City's "Analysis of Impediments." The study found that fair housing conditions in the County are generally good and, in some cases, outstanding. However, the report did recommend establishing a fair housing collaborative

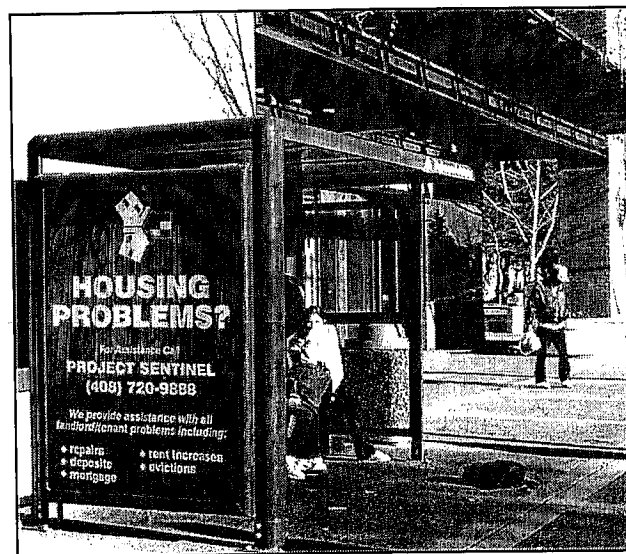
and several improvements in fair housing services and structure.

Action 21.c Continue to prepare an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice as required by HUD.

Action 21.d Participate in a countywide fair housing collaborative task force that will work toward improvement in fair housing services and structure.

Policy 22. Encourage good relations between housing providers and tenants.

Mountain View contracts with a non-profit agency to carry out its Tenant/Landlord Information and Mediation Service. The agency helps tenants and rental property owners (as well as neighbors and others who have disagreements) resolve their disputes. Mediation is fast, free and confidential. The mediators are Mountain View residents who volunteer their services and are trained by the agency. These volunteer mediators have also helped facilitate neighborhood workshops concerning the efficiency studio project and mobile home park issues.



Free mediation services advertised at bus stop.

Action 22.a Continue to refer rental property owner-tenant complaints to a City-funded contractor for mediation.

Despite publicity by the City of Mountain View, housing advocacy organizations and the Tri-County Apartment Association, the availability of mediation services is still not as widely known as it could be.

Action 22.b Identify and implement new outreach and promotion mechanisms to increase awareness among renters of the existing City-funded mediation program.

ANNUAL REVIEW

Goal

E

Maintain an up-to-date Housing Element.

The Housing Element is an invaluable planning tool, but it is only useful if it is consulted, monitored and, most importantly, implemented. An annual review is required by the State. To ensure that the review is meaningful, the Housing Element should be incorporated into the City Council's annual goal-setting process.

Policy 23. Establish a Housing Element implementation plan with appropriate staffing and budget; review annually.

Action 23.a Incorporate consideration of Housing Element implementation into the City Council's annual goal-setting process.

Action 23.b Prepare an annual report to the City Council which includes the results of Housing Element implementation for the past year.

NEIGHBORHOODS

Neighborhoods are the foundation of the city. Strong, healthy neighborhoods are vital to the overall well-being of the community. A

neighborhood is a group of homes that share some common identity because of location, building style, density, or the people who live there. Two kinds of characteristics—psychological and physical—give meaning to the term "neighborhood."

Psychologically, neighborhoods give people a sense of belonging, of comfort, and of refuge. They allow people to connect with their neighbors informally, to meet others casually, to share interests, and to experience the diversity of cultures, ages, and ways of living that add to the richness of the community. Some neighborhoods are very well defined with formal boundaries and organized associations. Other neighborhoods have only a few of these characteristics, but are still recognizable as being different from surrounding residential areas.

Physically, neighborhoods include housing, streets and sidewalks, and, often, a focal point like a school, a park or a shopping center that gives identity to an area.

Mountain View recognizes the importance of creating and enhancing neighborhoods. Good neighborhoods allow people a widening circle of contacts, from individual to family, to neighborhood, to community. Neighborhoods help people take the important step from individual to city-wide involvement.

Goal

F

Maintain and enhance the quality and character of Mountain View's neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Associations

Neighborhood associations are voluntary affiliations of people with common interests based on where they live. Associations can be loosely organized groups that meet sporadically when an issue arises. Or they can be formally organized with boards of directors and bylaws.

Neighborhood associations provide a forum for communication with City Hall, hold social events, plan for local disaster preparedness, sponsor Neighborhood Watch and recycling programs, and promote other activities to preserve quality of life.

Most active associations hold public meetings, and some publish newsletters and host web sites.

Policy 24. Support neighborhood associations.

The City acknowledges and supports neighborhood associations in several ways. It publishes a Neighborhood Handbook which includes a step-by-step guide to forming neighborhood associations. The Handbook also describes City ordinances on noise, property maintenance, home occupations, animals, and other issues that affect neighborhoods. It also describes the many City programs that serve neighborhoods.

Action 24.a Assist neighborhood groups to form neighborhood associations.

Action 24.b Maintain an up-to-date Neighborhood Handbook and publicize its availability.

The City helps to encourage participation in neighborhood associations by providing them with small grants to host block parties, publish newsletters, develop web sites and other qualifying activities aimed at improving neighborhoods. Residents can also find a list of neighborhood associations and contact information on the City's web site.

Action 24.c Support the efforts of neighborhood associations to strengthen their organizations.

Action 24.d Maintain and publicize a list of neighborhood associations active in Mountain View.

Interaction with Neighborhoods

Policy 25. Promote active communication between the City and its neighborhoods.

One way that Mountain View ensures active communication is for the Council Neighborhoods Committee to hold special outreach meetings in neighborhoods. The Committee meets in each of six areas of the City every two years, usually at schools.

These meetings bring Councilmembers and City staff together with residents to discuss how to improve their neighborhoods.

Action 25.a Continue to hold special outreach meetings of the Council Neighborhoods Committee in locations throughout the City.

Residents who live in mobile home parks or in apartment buildings may have shared interests that are not related to geographical neighborhood boundaries. These residents may also benefit from meetings where information can be exchanged with Councilmembers.

Action 25.b Explore the possibility of holding outreach meetings with special resident groups such as mobile home residents and renters.

Action 25.c Periodically review the meeting format and neighborhood areas for the outreach meetings of the Council Neighborhoods Committee to ensure the best possible neighborhood feedback.

Action 25.d Continue to disseminate information about City services and relevant phone numbers on the City's web site, in The View and in other printed handouts.

Investment in Neighborhoods

Mountain View's neighborhoods were built and improved incrementally over a 100-year history. Over time, the infrastructure (roads, sidewalks, parks) in the neighborhoods has aged and design standards have changed. Today, each neighborhood has different needs. In older neighborhoods, sidewalks may be deteriorating while street trees are mature. In another area, trees are needed, but sidewalks and streets are in good condition. In some neighborhoods, public parks are ample while in others, there are few.

Policy 26. Develop and maintain projects and programs that respond to the individual needs of neighborhoods.

Mountain View has developed several programs that evaluate the needs of individual neighborhoods and compare them to the needs of the City as a whole. The Parks and Open Space Plan is notable for assessing each neighborhood's park needs against city-wide standards. The City also has a sidewalk replacement program and a street tree planting plan that schedules improvements based on need. These programs establish priorities for funding land purchases and facility improvements out of the City's capital improvement budget.

Action 26.a Evaluate the needs of individual neighborhoods when expending limited City capital improvement funds.



Old Mountain View neighborhood celebrates the dedication of Mercy-Bush Park.

Mountain View also has a Neighborhood Traffic Management Program which is a standardized process for responding to concerns from residents about speeding and cut-through traffic. This program gives every neighborhood an equal opportunity to have its traffic problems reviewed. Residents on affected streets can vote on whether to install traffic management devices. In its first six years, 15 streets in Mountain View were studied and traffic management devices were installed on nine of them.

Action 26.b Apply the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program to concerns about speeding and cut-through traffic on neighborhood streets.

Preserving and Enhancing Neighborhoods

Mountain View has many different kinds of neighborhoods, some very uniform and others that have a variety of housing types. The City uses the zoning ordinance and the design review process to be sure that Mountain View's community character, housing quality and physical and visual environment are maintained and improved.

In 1991, and again in 2000, the City revised its residential development standards in response to concerns about over-sized houses and loss of privacy resulting from large remodeling projects and second-story additions. In 2000, the R1 (single-family) zone was amended to reduce the height limit, increase second-story setbacks, limit second-story decks and reduce the amount of floor area allowed under the exception process. The rules for accessory structures and companion units were also updated. These changes sought to balance the often competing objectives of preserving neighborhood character while providing flexibility for expansions and modernization.

Policy 27. Preserve and enhance the character of Mountain View's neighborhoods.

Design review is required for development in multiple-family zones, as well as for requests for variances and exceptions in the R1 zone. As a part of the 2000 zoning ordinance amendments, the criteria for development review permits were changed to specify that neighborhood compatibility is one of the standards for design approval.

Action 27.a Continue to use the design review process to ensure that new development is compatible with the existing neighborhood.

Homeowners are strongly encouraged to notify their neighbors about their remodeling plans, but not everyone does. A more formal process may be needed.

Action 27.b Consider options for a process for notifying neighbors when major additions or new construction are proposed for single-family houses.

The 2000 revisions also clarified the process whereby neighborhoods can apply for approval of single-story and neighborhood design overlay zones. Residents can petition the City to rezone their neighborhoods to establish special rules that ensure that new development is compatible with their existing home styles. Single-story overlay zones were applied in three neighborhoods between 2000 and 2002.

The revised residential development standards and review process are working well, but the City's design review process will be very important as more housing is built in already developed areas.

Code Enforcement

Most residents take pride in the appearance of their homes. They understand and respect the City's property development and maintenance standards. However, there are still instances of rundown property, unsightly or broken equipment stored in front yards, vehicles parked illegally in front and side yards and zoning violations in many areas of the City. To reduce this blight, Mountain View has an active code enforcement program that was consolidated in the City Attorney's office and expanded in 1999.

The code enforcement officers respond to violations in both residential and other areas of the City. Many property owners correct violations when notified, but some do not. In 2002, the City Council approved the use of administrative remedies to enhance the code enforcement program. Under the new rules, the City can issue civil citations, hold administrative hearings and levy fines, as an alternative to court proceedings.

Policy 28. Ensure compliance with zoning and property maintenance standards.

Action 28.a Maintain a strong code enforcement program that preserves the quality of residential neighborhood.

The City has other programs aimed at enhancing the visual character of neighborhoods and eliminating blight. One is the graffiti abatement program which requires property owners to remove graffiti within a set time period. Quick removal of graffiti discourages graffiti artists and impedes the efforts of rival gangs to "tag" their territory.

Another program targets abandoned shopping carts. Store owners must retrieve shopping carts which have been abandoned on public property within 72 hours of notification. After that time period, the City will remove them and store owners have to pay a fee to get them back.

Action 28.b Continue and periodically evaluate programs (such as graffiti control and shopping cart abatement) to reduce blight in public areas and neighborhoods.